

Pacino, De Niro hot in 'Heat'

BY BOB THOMAS
AT NEW FEATURES

Seasoned directors are sometimes seized with the impulse to make revisionist versions of tried-and-true film genres — the Western, the comedy, the gangster movie. The result can be outdated spectacles with big names, elaborate production and lengthy running time.

Such is the case with "Heat," written, directed and co-produced by Michael Mann ("Miami Vice," "The Last of the Mohicans").

The stars: Al Pacino, Robert De Niro, Val Kilmer. The set piece: three meticulous heists. Running time: almost three hours.

"Despite its excesses, 'Heat' is eminently watchable. Seeing the two great practitioners of the crime movie together (though they meet only twice, the last time violently) is a treat in itself. The logistics and the execution of the robberies have a morbid fascination. And the violent action is overlaid with a melancholy view of the lives of a master criminal and a demonic crime fighter.

De Niro has served time, and now he is determined to make a big score and vanish to New Zealand.

REVIEW

land. He and his gang, including Kilmer, Tom Sizemore and "fixer" Jon Voight, pull off a deftly choreographed robbery of an armored truck that starts the movie with high excitement.

The daring heist and the execution of the guards immediately fixates Pacino, a Los Angeles robbery-homicide detective. His three marriages attest to his single-mindedness about his work. With the help of his police crew and informers, Pacino begins to piece together the identities of the gang. The members are put under surveillance, and their next job is aborted when De Niro realizes they have been detected.

Aided by Voight's information, De Niro and company attempt their last big haul: a bank vault loaded with cash. The planning succeeds until the escape. Police swarm around them, and a minor war ensues through the streets of downtown Los Angeles. It is the film's most gruesome excess.

The gang scatters and the detectives close in. The final battle comes at Los Angeles International Airport, where the on-and-off landing lights eerily illuminate the gunmen.

Side-plots feature the women in the story: Pacino's third wife, Diane Venora, whose crumbling marriage causes her to turn to another man; De Niro's newfound love, Amy Brenneman, whose sweetness contrasts his cold-blooded nature; Kilmer's wife, Ashley Judd, who refuses to betray him. All three actresses perform ably.

Pacino and De Niro know the territory and are in peak form. They have a classic scene in a coffee shop where they openly, if improbably, discuss their work. Their weary conclusion: "I don't know how to do anything else."

"I don't either."

Mann deserves high points for devising the richly textured tale and keeping it in some form of cohesion. If only he as co-producer could have said, "Enough, already."

The Warner Bros. release was also produced by Art Linson. The rating is R for language and excessive violence, including pointblank killings.



FRANK CONROY

Crime story: Robert De Niro, as top-level cold-blooded career thief Neil McCauley and Val Kilmer as Chris Shiherlis, his trusted crew member, in Warner Bros. and Regency Enterprises' "Heat."

COMING ATTRACTIONS

OPENING MONDAY, DEC. 25

"FOUR ROOMS"

It's New Year's Eve at a Los Angeles hotel, and the new bellboy must deal with the goings-on in four different rooms. An ensemble film written and directed by Allison Anders, Alexandra Rockwell, Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino. Stars Tim Roth, Bruce Willis, Jennifer Beals, Madonna, Seymour Cassel, Valeria Golino, Marisa Tomei, and Quentin Tarantino.

OPENING FRIDAY, DEC. 29

"OTHHELLO"

Exclusively at the Main Art Theatre. The classic Shakespeare tragedy starring Laurence Fishburne, Kenneth Branagh, Irene Jacob, Nathaniel Parker and Michael Maloney.

"RESTORATION"

The moving story of the impossible.

KERRY HAYES/AMERICAN CREEK PRODUCTIONS, INC.



KERRY HAYES/AMERICAN CREEK PRODUCTIONS, INC.

Romantic comedy: Denis Leary and Sandra Bullock star in Morgan Creek's "Two If by Sea" opening Jan. 12 at metro Detroit movie theaters.

to Robert Merivel, who eagerly embraces the high living and low moral standards of the court of Charles II. When Merivel falls from grace, he must create his own political and social restoration. Stars Robert Downey, Jr., Meg Ryan.

OPENING FRIDAY, JAN. 5

"12 MONKEYS"

Sci-fi thriller about a convict who could be pardoned if he successfully defeats a deadly virus that would make the planet uninhabitable.

OPENING, FRIDAY, JAN. 12

"CRY, THE BELLOVED COUNTRY"

Based on the novel by Alan Paton. The story of the reconciliation of two men, who have each lost a son to the violence of South Africa — one black, the other white. Stars James Earl Jones, Richard Harris.

"MARY REILLY"

A gripping drama of good and evil, love and passion about an innocent maid who idolizes her employer and benefactor, Dr. Jekyll, but finds he's hiding a horrible secret about his assistant Mr. Hyde. Stars Julia Roberts and John Malkovich.

"TWO IF BY THE SEA"

A dark comedy about a hapless thief and his smarter, more ambitious girlfriend, who find themselves stuck on an elegant Cape Cod island as they attempt to fence a stolen painting. Stars Denis Leary and Sandra Bullock.



MIRAMAX FILMS

New Year's Eve: It's New Year's Eve at a Los Angeles hotel, and the new bellboy must deal with the goings-on in four different rooms in "Four Rooms" starring Madonna (left to right), Sammi Davis, Valeria Golino, Lili Taylor and Lone Snake.

OPENING FRIDAY, JAN. 19

"TWO BITS"

Warm-hearted coming-of-age story

that revolves around a lovable but feisty grandfather and his grandson. Stars Al Pacino.

THE ONLY ACTION IN TOWN!

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"A PURE ADRENALIN RUSH."

"VAN DAMME SHOOT AND SCORES."

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Two Very Enthusiastic Thumbs Up!

"YOU COME OUT OF THE THEATRE FEELING LIKE A MILLION DOLLARS!"

The once-upon-a-time magic still works. Thanks to an award-winning script and spectacularly baroque production design, "Sabrina" projects the same sense of innocence and elegance, of wit and wonder as the original! (Review: Newsweek, 1/1/96)

"A GREAT DATE FILM!"

The charm and romance alone! (Review: Newsweek, 1/1/96)

"A SMASH!"

Wonderful! "Sabrina" is the real thing! Nobody does romance better than the Academy Award-winning Mr. Pollack. Ormand in captivity. Ford is made for this role. Kincaid is a revelation in his debut! (Review: Newsweek, 1/1/96)

Harrison FORD Julia ORMOND

Sabrina



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STAR TAYLOR STAR FAIRLAKE

STAR 12 OAKS STAR WEST RIVER

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AMC STERLING CTR. 10	BEACON EAST	AMC CANTON
AMC NOV TOWN	NORWEST	QUO VADIS
RENAISSANCE 4	SHOWCASE 10	SHOWCASE 10
SHOWCASE 10	SHOWCASE 10	STAR ORLANDO AT 10:30 PM
STAR LINCOLN PARK 8	STAR ROCHESTER HILLS	STAR TAYLOR
STAR WYOMING 10	STAR 12 OAKS	NO PASSES OR COUPONS ACCEPTED

AMC SOUTHFIELDCITY	AMC WOODS 6
SHOWCASE CANTON	SHOWCASE SOUTHWEST
STAR JOHN R AT 11:30 PM	STAR LINCOLN PARK 8
STAR TAYLOR	STAR FAIRLAKE
STAR 12 OAKS	STAR WEST RIVER
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AMC NOV TOWN	SHOWCASE 10	SHOWCASE 10
SHOWCASE 10	SHOWCASE 10	STAR ORLANDO AT 10:30 PM
STAR JOHN R AT 11:30 PM	STAR ROCHESTER HILLS	STAR TAYLOR
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